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PAGE 02 SEOUL 01900 161012Z

AFTERNOON PAPERS CARRY STATEMENTS RELEASED EARLIER IN DAY BY DEFENSE MINISTRY AND VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES. EVEN SEOUL SINMUN RELEGATED THESE STATEMENTS TO THIRD PAGE.

4. AMONG WIRE SERVICE REPORTS GIVEN PROMINENT ATTENTION IS ALLEGED STATEMENT BY "REMEMBER THE PUEBLO COMMITTEE" THAT SEVEN CREW MEMBERS SURVIVED AND WERE PICKED UP BY NKOREANS. REPRESENTATIVE RIVERS STATEMENT THAT WE SHOULD USE EVERY MEANS OF RETALIATION POSSIBLE INCLUDING NUCLEAR WEAPONS ALSO GIVEN FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE. SPECULATION IN WASHINGTON CIRCLES THAT INCIDENT MIGHT PRECIPITATE CALL FOR STEP UP OF MILITARY AID ALSO RECEIVED WIDE PRESS PLAY.

5. FONMIN OFFICIAL HAS CALLED TO SAY HIS MINISTER BEING PRESSURED TO APPEAR BEFORE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APRIL 17 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON INCIDENT. MINISTER SEEKING TO POSTPONE APPEARANCE AS ROKG DOES NOT WISH TO TAKE A POSITION UNTIL IT HAS THE FACTS. SPECIFICALLY, IT IS WAITING TO SEE WHAT LINE USG TAKES.

6. COMMENT: APPARENT EMBARGO ON DEFENSE MINISTRY AND POLITICAL PARTY REACTIONS TO AIRCRAFT INCIDENT MAY BE IN EFFORT TO LIMIT SPECULATIVE AND OFF-HANDED COMMENTS BEFORE ROKG TAKES OFFICIAL STANCE ON ISSUE.

DECON 7/1/70.

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ACTION EA 15

INFO IO 13, CIAE 00, DODE 00, JPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,
 P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, UPW 01, RSR 01, NIC 01, SSO 00,

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P 160825Z APR 69
 FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5791
 INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
 CINCPAC

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SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO AIRCRAFT INCIDENT

REFERENCE: SEOUL 1890

1. AFTERNOON PRESS APRIL 16 GIVES BANNER HEADLINE ATTENTION
 TO AIRCRAFT INCIDENT WITH ACCOMPANYING SORTIES BASED
 PRIMARILY ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS DATELINED WASHINGTON.

2. EDITORIAL LINE OF ALL NEWSPAPERS IS CALL FOR RETALIATORY
 ACTION BY US CLAIMING THAT LIMIT TO PATIENCE HAS BEEN REACHED.
 DOMINANT THEME ALSO IS THAT LACK OF RESPONSE TO PUEBLO SEIZURE
 ENCOURAGES NKOREA TO UNDERTAKE ACTIONS THIS KIND WITHOUT
 SERIOUS RISK OF RETALIATION. SOME PAPERS SPECULATE THAT
 NKOREANS WISH TO HUMILIATE US AND WANT TO SHIFT TENSION FROM
 SEASIA TO NEASIA. OTHERS EDITORIALY CALL ATTENTION TO
 NECESSITY FOR STRENGTHENING OF ROKAF TO PREPARE FOR FUTURE
 NKOREAN PROVOCATIONS. MINOR THEMES EXPRESS SATISFACTION UPON
 LEARNING THAT US TAKING NECESSARY MEASURES TO MEET SITUATION.
 ONE PAPER SPECIFICALLY REFERS TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S CAMPAIGN
 STATEMENTS REGARDING INSUFFICIENT ACTION BY JOHNSON
 ADMINISTRATION AT TIME OF PUEBLO AND CRYPTICALLY
 NOTES THAT NEW PRESIDENT NOW HAS CHANCE TO ACT.

3. EXCEPT FOR GOVERNMENT-OWNED SEOUL SINMUN, NONE OF ISX

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DRAFTED BY: EA/P: RN KILPATRICK

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R 240021Z APR 69
 FM SECSTATE WASHDC
 TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 AMEMBASSY SEOUL
 AMEMBASSY TOKYO
 AMCONSUL HONG KONG
 CINCPAC
 HICOMRY OKINAWA
 USMISSION NATO

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EXCERPTS FROM DEPT'S PRESS BRIEFING APRIL 23, 1969 FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT

Q. BOB, DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT TO MAKE ON THE NORTH KOREAN
 STATEMENT IN THE AIRPLANE INCIDENT?

A. (MR. MCCLOSKEY) NO, SIR.

Q. WAS THERE A RESPONSE?

A. THERE IS ALWAYS A RESPONSE, IT IS: "NO, SIR." (LAUGHTER.)

Q. BOB, THERE'S A REUTERS STORY THAT U.S. ARTILLERY OPENED UP
 ALONG THE 38TH PARALLEL AND CREATED WHAT THE NORTH KOREANS
 CLAIM WAS A "MASSIVE PROVOCATION." IS THERE ANY COMMENT ON
 THAT?

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A. NO, SIR.

Q. THERE ARE ALSO RUMORS THAT AMERICAN WARSHIPS FIRED ON NORTH KOREAN TERRITORY. ANYTHING TO SAY ON THAT?

A. I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY.

Q. ANYTHING ON ANOTHER MEETING AT PANMUNJOM?

A. NO. NEITHER SIDE HAS ASKED FOR ANOTHER MEETING.

Q. IS IT OUR TURN TO ASK? IS IT ROTATED?

A. YES, BUT THERE WAS NO DECISION MADE BY EITHER SIDE THAT I'M AWARE OF, TO CONTINUE THE EXCHANGE.

Q. BOB, COULD YOU SAY WHETHER THIS TASK FORCE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY KIND OF ACTION WITH NORTH KOREA AT ALL?

A. NOW THESE ARE MATTERS THAT I RARELY DISCUSS HERE. I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE IT HAS.

Q. COULD IT BE THE POLICY OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO TRY TO KEEP SUCH ACTION SECRET?

A. NOW, I'M GOING TO BE SURE WHAT TRACK WE'RE GOING DOWN HERE. I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL A BIT NERVOUS ABOUT THIS.

Q. THAT'S AS FAR AS I WANT TO CARRY IT.

A. WELL--I CERTAINLY WOULD ASSUME NOT, AND I WOULD THINK IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DO.

Q. CAN YOU SHED ANY FURTHER LIGHT ON THE SOVIET PROTESTS ON MONDAY TO THE UNITED STATES ON THE NAVAL BUILDUP? THEN SECONDLY, CAN YOU GIVE US ANY DETAILS OF THE MEETING BETWEEN OUR AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW AND MR. KOSYGIN?

A. ON THE FIRST, THERE WERE APPROACHES BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WHICH WERE PARALLEL IN MOSCOW AND IN WASHINGTON. I WOULD LOOK UPON IT AS ONE AND THE SAME. THAT IS TO SAY, THERE WERE NOT

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TWO PROTESTS--AND INDEED, WE HAVE NOT, OURSELVES, LOOKED UPON THESE AS "PROTESTS."

I DON'T WANT TO QUARREL ABOUT WORDS. THEY DID COMPLAIN ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE US NAVAL UNITS IN THE SEA OF JAPAN. OUR RESPONSE IN BOTH CASES--IN MOSCOW AND IN WASHINGTON, WAS TO REFER TO THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK, AFTER THE INCIDENT, AND IN GENERAL, TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT PERHAPS THEIR COMPLAINTS MIGHT BETTER BE ADDRESSED TO THE NORTH KOREANS, NORTH KOREA BEING THE CAUSE FOR TENSION IN THE AREA--BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR TENSION IN THE AREA. NOW, ON THE SECOND POINT, AMBASSADOR BEAM CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER KOSYGIN YESTERDAY. THE MEETING LASTED FOR OVER AN HOUR AND THAT INVOLVED A REVIEW OF MAJOR PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. IT WAS AT OUR AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST. IT WAS HIS FIRST MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THE CUSTOMARY KIND OF THING THAT A NEW AMBASSADOR ON STATION UNDERTAKES.

Q. DID HE DELIVER ANY NOTES FROM THE GOVERNMENT, POSSIBLE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS?

A. NO, I WOULD NOT ASSUME THAT. I BELIEVE THE AMBASSADOR DID CONVEY A MESSAGE OF GREETING FROM THE PRESIDENT--AND THAT, AGAIN I EMPHASIZE IS CUSTOMARY FOR A NEW AMBASSADOR TO DO.

Q. DURING THIS SESSION, YOU ARE NOT SAYING THAT THIS SESSION INCLUDED THE COMPLAINT--THAT PRIME MINISTER KOSYGIN DID NOT DELIVER THE COMPLAINT TO AMBASSADOR BEAM DURING THIS--

A. NO. ON THE INCIDENT, THE MATTER OF THE SEA OF JAPAN, THAT MEETING IN MOSCOW WAS BETWEEN AMBASSADOR BEAM AND (VASILY) KUZNETSOV, THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER.

Q. WHERE DID THAT TAKE PLACE, BOB?

A. IN MOSCOW--KREMLIN.

Q. IN THE KREMLIN?

A. (NODS IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.) NO, I'M SORRY. IT MAY HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

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Q. DO YOU KNOW WHETHER AMBASSADOR BEAM'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT INCLUDED THAT OLD AMERICAN EXPRESSION: "HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON"?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT, JOHN.

Q. BOB, SERIOUSLY, ON THIS MATTER OF THE RUSSIANS' COMPLAINT ABOUT THE STIMULATION OF THE TASK FORCE, WHAT ARE THEY COMPLAINING AGAINST--IN A SPECIFIC SENSE? IN OTHER WORDS, ARE THEY COMPLAINING THAT THERE'S A THREAT TOWARDS NORTH KOREA, FOR EXAMPLE? OR A THREAT TO THEIR OWN TERRITORY?

A. I REALLY BELIEVE THAT INASMUCH AS THESE APPROACHES WERE INITIATED BY THE SOVIET UNION, THAT THAT KIND OF QUESTION OUGHT TO BE ADDRESSED TO THEM.

Q. WELL, LET'S TURN IT AROUND THE OTHER WAY. DID WE OFFER ANY REASSURANCES AS TO NONRETALIATORY INTENTIONS AGAINST THE TERRITORY OF NORTH KOREA?

A. OUR RESPONSE WAS VIRTUALLY THE SAME AS THE PRESIDENT'S OUTLINE IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE OF HIS DECISION TO CONTINUE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS, AND TO PROTECT THEM.

Q. BOB, HAS THE SUBJECT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA BEEN DISCUSSED BY ANY SOVIET AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS IN RECENT DAYS?

A. HOW COULD I SAY "NO" TO THAT?

Q. WELL, LET'S PUT IT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DISCUSSIONS THEY--ALL OF THE VARIOUS DISCUSSIONS WE HAVE JUST NOW BEEN TALKING ABOUT--BEAM-KOSYGIN; BEAM-KUZNETSOV; DOBRYNIN, HERE.

A. DOBRYNIN HERE, WITH UNDER SECRETARY RICHARDSON ON MONDAY EVENING, WAS CONFINED TO THE SEA OF JAPAN MATTER. BEAM-KUZNETSOV, IN MOSCOW, CONFINED TO THE SEA OF JAPAN MATTER. BEAM AND KOSYGIN--A RANGE OF TOPICS WHICH I DON'T HAVE AND CANNOT IDENTIFY--TOPICS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. AS FOR A SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, NOTHING I KNOW OF IN THESE PAST COUPLE OF DAYS HAS CENTERED ON IT.

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Q. WOULD THAT INCLUDE THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR'S VISIT HERE?

A. THAT WOULD INCLUDE THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR'S VISIT HERE.

Q. BOB, JUST ON THAT SUBJECT OF HIS VISIT HERE, THAT WAS TO MAKE A PITCH FOR THE EAST-WEST SECURITY CONFERENCE. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. YES.

Q. AND BOB, I WONDER IF YOU WOULD CLARIFY A STATEMENT THAT I UNDERSTOOD YOU TO MAKE EARLIER, TO THE EFFECT THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO CONTINUE THOSE EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA AT PANMUNJOM. THE REGULAR MAC MEETINGS, OF COURSE, WOULD BE CONTINUED--BUT THE EXCHANGES WOULD NOT BE CONTINUED BRIEFLY--

A. OVER THE SHOOTING DOWN OF THE AMERICAN AIRCRAFT. WE ASSUMED THAT WHEN THE NORTH KOREANS ASKED FOR A MEETING ON THE 18TH, THAT IT WAS FOR THAT PURPOSE; AND THAT IS WHY WE ACCEPTED, APPEARED, AND MADE A STATEMENT. NOW I CANNOT SENSIBLY TELL YOU THAT IN A FUTURE MEETING THAT THAT TOPIC MAY NOT BE REFERRED TO. BUT I KNOW OF NO MEETING CALLED FOR THAT EXPRESS PURPOSE AT THIS TIME.

Q. IS THERE ANOTHER REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULED SOON OF THE MAC?

A. WELL, I DON'T KNOW. THEY ARE--I DON'T BELIEVE THEY ARE REGULARLY SCHEDULED. THEY ARE CALLED AS EITHER SIDE SEES FIT.

Q. BOB, HAVE WE EXCHANGED ANY INFORMATION WITH NORTH KOREA ON THIS PLANE INCIDENT, OTHER THAN THAT ONE MEETING AT PANMUNJOM?

A. THAT IS ALL.

Q. WERE WE EXPECTING SOME TYPE OF SPECIFIC RESPONSE FROM THEM, OR A STATEMENT TO BE MADE THERE.

A. FOR BACKGROUND, THEIR BEHAVIOR WAS RATHER CURIOUS. BECAUSE THEY CAME INTO THE MEETING, WE WERE ASSUMING THAT THEY WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THIS SUBJECT--WHICH THEY DID NOT DO.

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Q. WELL I FIND IT QUITE CONFUSING. THERE SEEMS TO BE AN IMPLICATION IN WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, AND IN SOME OF THE THINGS THAT SENATOR KIRKSEN SAID YESTERDAY. AN IMPLICATION THAT WE WERE EXPECTING SOME PARTICULAR TYPE OF RESPONSE FROM THEM. AND IT'S NOT AT ALL CLEAR IN MY MIND WHAT KIND OF RESPONSE WE WERE EXPECTING--WHETHER IT WAS TO BE AN APOLOGY, OR WHAT WE WERE FISHING FOR--DO YOU KNOW?

A. NO. YOU HAVE KIND OF LOST ME. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT WHEN WE AGREED TO APPEAR AT THE MEETING, WE ASSUMED THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WERE GOING TO RAISE THE PLANE INCIDENT.

NOW, MAYBE THEY INTENDED TO DO IT, AND DIDN'T GET TO IT UNTIL MAJOR GENERAL KNAPP HAD MADE HIS STATEMENT AND THEN WALKED OUT.

I DON'T KNOW--I'M SORRY, YOU'VE LOST ME ON SENATOR KIRKSEN. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE SAID, OR WHAT HE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE MEANT. END TEXT
ROGERS

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